

**Personalized  
Safety Planning  
for  
Victims  
of  
Domestic**



**CHECK-  
LIST  
FOR  
SAFETY**



**Family Violence** is a serious crime and victims must be prepared to take steps to address their safety as well as the safety of their children.

The following suggestions represent a plan for increasing your safety and preparing in advance for the possibility of further violence. Although you do not have control over your partner's violence, **YOU** do have a choice about how you respond to him/her and how to best get yourself and your children to safety.

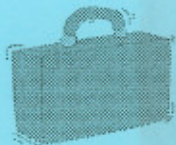
## Safety During a Violent Incident

You can not always avoid violent incidents but in order to increase your safety, you can use some or all of the following strategies. Ask yourself these questions:

- ◆ If I decide to leave, I will \_\_\_\_\_ (Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells or fire escapes would you use?)



- ◆ I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them (place) \_\_\_\_\_ in order to leave quickly.



- ◆ I can tell \_\_\_\_\_ about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.
- ◆ I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department.



- ◆ I will use \_\_\_\_\_ as my code for my children or my friends so they can call for help.
- ◆ If I have to leave my home, I will go to \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ If I can not go to the above location, then I can go to \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ I can also teach some of these strategies to my children.
- ◆ When I expect we are going to have an argument, I will try to move to a space that is lowest in risk, such as \_\_\_\_\_ . ) (Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons or in rooms without access to an outside door.)
- ◆ I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I can give my partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down. I have to protect myself until I/we are out of danger.

## Safety When Preparing to Leave

Victims of domestic violence frequently leave the residence they share with their abuser. Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Batterers often strike back when they believe that a victim is leaving the relationship.

- ◆ I will leave money and an extra set of keys with \_\_\_\_\_ so that I can leave quickly.
- ◆ I will keep copies of important documents or keys at \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ I will open a savings account by \_\_\_\_\_, to increase my independence.
- ◆ Other things I can do to increase my independence include: \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ The telephone number at Haven House (domestic violence shelter) is 884-6000. I can seek shelter by calling this number.
- ◆ I can keep change for phone calls on me at all times. To keep my telephone communications confidential, I must use coins and not a telephone credit card.
- ◆ I can check with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.
- ◆ I can leave extra clothes with \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ I will rehearse my escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with my children.

## Safety In My Own Home

- ◆ I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- ◆ I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- ◆ I can install security systems including additional locks, windows bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.
- ◆ I can install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers.
- ◆ I can install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to my home.
- ◆ I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to \_\_\_\_\_ in the event that my partner takes them.
- ◆ I will tell people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick them up and that my partner is not permitted to do so.
- ◆ I can inform my neighbors that my partner no longer resides with me and they should call the police if he/she is observed near my residence.



## Safety With An Order Of Protection

Some abusers do not obey the mandates of the court and will violate an order of protection. I recognize that I may need to ask the police and the court to enforce my protection order.

- ◆ I will keep my protection order \_\_\_\_\_. (Always keep it on or near your person and in a safe place in your home.)
- ◆ I will make sure that my protection order is on file with my local police department and the statewide registry.
- ◆ If my partner destroys my protection order, I will get another copy from the court where it was issued.
- ◆ I will inform my employer, friends, neighbors, and family that I have a protection order in effect.
- ◆ If my partner violates the order, I will call the police and report the violation. I can also call my attorney and my advocate and advise the court of the violation.

911



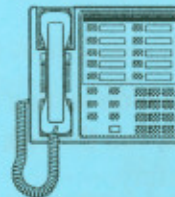
911

- ◆ I can also file a criminal complaint with the district attorney in the jurisdiction where the violation occurred. I can charge my battering partner with a violation of the order of protection and all crimes that he commits in violating the order.

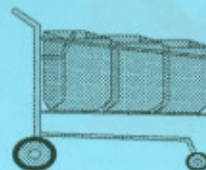
## Safety On The Job and In Public

You must decide if and when you will tell others that you have been battered and may be at continued risk. Friends, family and co-workers can help protect you but consider carefully which people you invite to help secure your safety.

- ◆ I can inform my boss, my security supervisor and \_\_\_\_\_ at work of my situation.
- ◆ I can ask \_\_\_\_\_ to help screen my telephone calls at work.



- ◆ When leaving work, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ If problems occur when driving home, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ If I use public transportation, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ I will go to different grocery stores, banks and shopping malls to conduct my business and shop at hours that are different than those when residing with my partner.



## Safety and Drug or Alcohol Use

The legal outcomes of using illegal drugs can be very hard on a battered person, may hurt their relationship with their children and put the person at a disadvantage in other legal actions with a battering partner.

Therefore, you should consider the potential cost of the use of illegal drugs. The use of any alcohol or other drug can reduce a person's awareness and ability to act quickly to protect themselves during a battering incident. In the context of drug or alcohol use, a person needs to make specific safety plans.

If drug or alcohol use has occurred in my relationship with my battering partner, I can enhance my safety by the following ways:

- ◆ If I am going to use, I can do so in a safe place and with people who understand the risk of violence and are committed to my safety.
- ◆ If my partner is using, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ To safeguard my children, I can \_\_\_\_\_.



## Safety and My Emotional Health

The experience of being battered and verbally degraded by partners is usually exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of building a new life for myself takes much courage and incredible energy.

To conserve my emotional energy and resources and to avoid hard emotional times, I can do some of the following:

- ◆ If I feel down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ When I have to communicate with my partner in person or by telephone, I can \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ I can call \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as other resources to be of support for me.
- ◆ I can tell myself “\_\_\_\_\_” whenever I feel others are trying to control or abuse me.
- ◆ I can attend a support group at the domestic violence program to gain support and strengthen my relationship with other people.



## Items To Take When Leaving

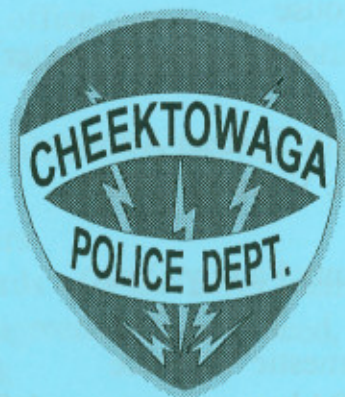
When I leave, I should have:

- ◆ Identification for myself
- ◆ Children's birth certificates
- ◆ My birth certificate
- ◆ Social security cards
- ◆ School and vaccination records
- ◆ Money
- ◆ Checkbook, ATM (automatic teller machine) card
- ◆ Credit cards
- ◆ Keys - house, office, car
- ◆ Driver's license and registration
- ◆ Medication
- ◆ Welfare identification, work permits, green card
- ◆ Passport(s)
- ◆ Divorce papers
- ◆ Medical records - for all family members
- ◆ Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book
- ◆ Bank books, insurance papers
- ◆ Address book
- ◆ Pictures, jewelry
- ◆ Children's favorite toys and/or blankets
- ◆ Items of special sentimental value
- ◆ Clothing for you and your children
- ◆ Copy of your order of protection

## Important Telephone Numbers

- ◆ **Cheektowaga Police Department**

Emergency	<b>911</b>
Non-emergency	686-3500
Detective Bureau	686-3505
  
- ◆ Police department at work \_\_\_\_\_
  
- ◆ Cheektowaga Town Court 686-3436
  
- ◆ Haven House  
(local battered women's shelter) 884-6000
  
- ◆ Erie County District Attorney's  
Domestic Violence Unit 858-2525
  
- ◆ Erie County Family Court 858-8100
  
- ◆ State Domestic Violence  
Hotline 24 hours 1-800-942-6906  
Spanish 1-800-942-6908
  
- ◆ Crisis Services (24 hrs.) 834-3131
  
- ◆ Erie County Senior Services 858-6877  
Protective Services for Older  
Adults



*This brochure is presented for your  
safety by the  
Cheektowaga Police  
Department  
and the  
Allstate Foundation*